Postcards from Iraq

What has Iraq been like for me?

By U.S. Army Staff Sqt. Tim Lovato, Transportation Office Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, Gulf Region Division, USACE

I arrived in Baghdad a year ago to arrange ground and air transportation for passengers and to be honest, the last 12 months have been a blur.

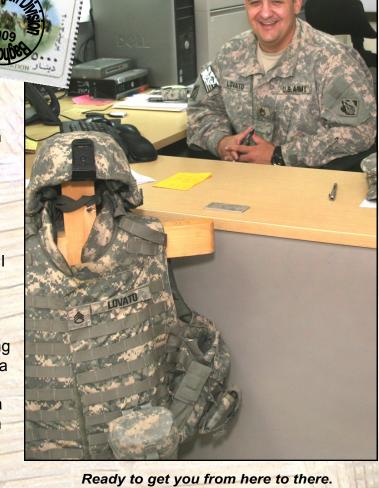
It is not the first year I have spent away from my wife and kids. There was Operation Enduring Freedom in Germany in 2005-2006 and a one-year tour in Korea starting in 1997. But of the three, this was by far the best.

I think I learned a lot about people of all backgrounds, both good and bad. I believe that the work that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers is doing will help build a stronger, better, Irag. I hope what I brought to the table helped my unit and the people of Irag. I think it was a productive year. I learned about foreign culture and history. I truly believe I received an education while deployed with the Corps' Gulf Region Division.

I hope the others that served alongside of me realize how good we had it. A CHU

Photos by F. T. Eyre

(Containerized Housing Unit) may be a large metal box, but it is a lot better than a tent and I rarely ran out of hot water.



"Hey Toto, were not in Kansas anymore."

I will remember smoking cigars with the guys around the fire pit, dust storms that would make you change three colors of brown, and scorching temperatures that would make a Mississippi summer seem tepid.

I guess that is enough rambling... It's almost time to pack the bags and head on home to 412th Engineer Command.

> Staff Sgt. Tim Lovato Clinton, Mississippi

Frequent gym workouts helped burn off 40 pounds.